Author’s response to reviews

**Title:** Post hoc analysis of initial treatments and control status in the INITIAL study: An observational study of newly diagnosed patients with asthma

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Response to reviewers’ comments: "Post hoc analysis of initial treatments and control status in the INITIAL study: An observational study of newly diagnosed patients with asthma" (PULM-D-19-00125), to BMC Pulmonary Medicine.

**Comment**

1. We note that the current submission contains some textual overlap with other previously published works. This overlap mainly exists in the Abstract, Background, Methods, and Discussion sections.

**Response**

Many thanks for your comment. We would highlight that overlap in this manuscript predominantly relates to the abstract which was submitted to the 23rd Congress of the Asian
We note that there are also very minor similarities with the primary manuscript in the methods and discussion, and these have been amended.

We would also note that the current manuscript is a post hoc analysis of the study reported in the primary manuscript and so details may be similar. However, we have cited the primary manuscript, where possible, to ensure that repetition is kept to an absolute minimum.

The abstract presented at the 23rd Congress of the Asian Pacific Society of Respirology presents the data on which this manuscript was based, and we agree that the content was too similar. Therefore, to reduce overlap we have edited the entire manuscript abstract.

Changes to manuscript

The abstract content has been modified. See text on lines 44–66 on pages 2–3.

We have also modified the text in the methods, lines 88-94 on page 4, and text in the discussion, lines 162-164 and lines 166-168 on page 7.

Comment

2. Please confirm whether the databases accessed and used in your study are public databases or whether permission was required for accessing them. If permission was obtained, please clearly state this in your manuscript, including the name of the entity by whom permission was granted.

Response

No databases were used in this study. The data presented in this manuscript are based on a post-hoc analysis of the INITIAL study (NCT02143739); the primary data were published previously in Scientific Reports (https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-018-36611-w)

Changes to manuscript

No change required

Comment

3. Thank you for providing an Ethics and consent for participation statement for your Declarations section, if you did not need formal ethics approval please confirm under the heading that the waiving of the need for ethical approval in this context complies with national guidelines and provide a reference which supports this. Alternatively, supply a statement that
says that a local ethics committee ruled that no formal ethics approval was required in this particular case. When doing so, please include the specific name of the ruling committee. If formal ethical approval has been granted for your research then please clearly state so, along with the full unabbreviated name of the ruling ethical committee that granted approval.

Similarly, if consent for participation was not required, we ask that you please provide details in your Ethics statement of why this was wavered and the institution/committee that approved this. When doing so, please also state the full names of any relevant national or international regulations and guidelines which preclude the necessity for seeking formal consent in the context of conducting the research as presented in your manuscript.

Response

Thank you for highlighting this. Information regarding ethical approval, review boards, and patients’ consent has been added to the manuscript.

Changes to manuscript

Text added, see lines 228–232 on page 10.

Comment

4. When submitting your revised manuscript please ensure you do so as a single clean copy without any tracked changes, colored or highlighted text, as these are no longer required at this stage of the editorial process.

Response

Many thanks for your guidance, this has been done.

Changes to manuscript

Changes have been made without using tracked changes, coloured or highlighted text – we have flagged the page numbers and line numbers of the additional content in this table.